American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)
Multinational Ballistic Missile Defense Conference
October 29, 2013
Draft Remarks for Ambassador Mull

Good morning. It's a pleasure to join you today. Thank you to the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics for organizing this conference, and to our Polish colleagues for hosting us here in Warsaw.

Missile defense is critically important to the United States and the NATO Alliance. I am proud of the progress we have made over recent years to increase NATO's ballistic missile defense capabilities. Over the next few minutes, I would like to touch upon the importance of defense modernization, review the status of the European Phased Adaptive Approach to missile defense, and advocate for interoperability as we develop our ballistic missile defense systems.

Defense Modernization

The threat from the proliferation of missile technology is one of the primary challenges we face in the 21st century. The threat is real and is not going away. Keeping up with the increasing capabilities of rogue states requires allied nations to take cooperative measures to protect all of our citizens. We share this responsibility, and we need to share a commitment to defense modernization.

Since we are gathered here in Warsaw, I think it is only appropriate to commend the Poles for their leadership in this area. While many NATO countries are reducing their spending on national security, Polish law requires defense spending must be 1.95% of its GDP. Moreover, the Polish Government publicly announced its' plans to spend an estimated $10 billion on integrated air and missile defense over the next ten years, with a priority on procuring systems that facilitate interoperability and defense cooperation with NATO countries. Poland is committed to protecting its citizens, and NATO is the bedrock of that commitment. I have no doubt that Poland's investment in these capabilities will significantly contribute to NATO countries' collective security.

European Phased Adaptive Approach

The United States is equally determined to protect our citizens and those of our allies. That is why we have dedicated significant resources to the NATO ballistic missile defense mission through the implementation of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) to missile defense.

The first phase began in 2011 with the sustained deployment of an Aegis ballistic missile defense-capable ship to the Mediterranean, along with the deployment of an AN/TPY-2 radar in Turkey. This was followed by an agreement with Spain to home-port four Aegis ships. This forward basing will complement the missile defense capability of the Aegis Ashore systems being deployed in Romania and Poland.

For Phase Two of the EPAA, Romania ratified an agreement in December of 2011 to host a U.S. land-based SM-3 interceptor site. Just yesterday, the U.S. and Romania broke ground at the Deveselu Air Base to start construction of this site. It will be operational in 2015, and the SM-3 interceptor, combined with ballistic missile defense-capable ships in the Mediterranean, will enhance coverage of NATO from ballistic missiles launched from the Middle East.

And, finally, we have an agreement with Poland for implementation of Phase Three. This agreement places a land-based SM-3 interceptor site in Poland, just like the land-based site that will be deployed in Romania. This site will be operational in 2018.

The U.S. commitment to Phases One through Three of the EPAA remains ironclad, and our implementation plan is on schedule.

The EPAA is the U.S. voluntary national contribution to the NATO ballistic missile defense mission. The radar we deployed in Turkey is under NATO operational control. In addition, our Aegis ships in Europe can operate under NATO operational control when threat conditions warrant.

These decisions created a framework for Allies to contribute their own ballistic missile defense assets for our collective self-defense. The United States

encourages such contributions from Allies. NATO missile defense will be more effective if Allies provide sensors and interceptors to complement the United States' EPAA contributions. Several NATO Allies already possess land- and sea-based sensors that could be linked into the system, as well as lower tier systems that can be integrated and used to provide point defense.

Interoperability

As we develop our ballistic missile defense systems, we must ensure that integration and compatibility remain at the forefront of our decisions. It is hard to overstate the importance of interoperability in the NATO context. Interoperable and deployable missile defense systems allow allies to combine their resources quickly in areas of instability.

The principle of interoperability is equally important within a single country's armed forces as it is in multinational operations. The United States learned this the hard way. For much of the 20th century, inter-service rivalry inhibited the ability of the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps to carry out joint missions. Peacetime activities, such as procurement, were tailored for each service in isolation. Likewise, each service planned, executed, and evaluated their military actions independently. These practices resulted not only didn't make financial sense but also led to a number of failed military operations.

One of the most vivid examples of this was our failed attempt in April 1980 to rescue fifty-three Americans held hostage in Tehran. Our military had six months to organize, plan, and train. Nonetheless, only six out of eight helicopters arrived at the rendezvous point, known as "Desert One," in the middle of Iran. Then, after aborting the mission, errors in coordination resulted in a collision between two aircraft and the death of eight servicemen.

What were the underlying problems? At that time, there was no existing joint organization capable of conducting such a raid. The joint task force commander, an Army Major General, had no experience in operations with other services. The participating service units had trained separately and met for the first time at the rendezvous point in Iran. Once there, they did not establish command and

control procedures or clear lines of authority. A senior Air Force commander later recalled that there were "four commanders at the scene without visible identification, incompatible radios, and no agreed-upon plan, not even a designated location for the commander."

In response to such failures, the U.S. Congress passed the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986 which forced our services toward interoperability. Since then, our forces have made tremendous progress in institutionalizing interoperability, including the implementation of regular joint training exercises and the use of standardized equipment.

Over the last twenty years our military services have also gained a tremendous amount of experience carrying out joint operations with allied forces. This is particularly true within the NATO Alliance. American troops in the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan have trained and fought side-by-side with British, Danish, and Polish soldiers, among others.

Polish members of the audience here today may be familiar with the story of Staff Sergeant Michael Ollis, an American soldier who was killed in Afghanistan this summer while shielding a Polish officer from a suicide bomber. Both men were defending their shared base in Ghazni Province from an insurgent attack. The assault began when a car bomb breached the base's eastern perimeter wall, allowing ten insurgents in suicide vests to infiltrate the compound. American and Polish troops headed to the blast site and engaged insurgents in a short but fierce firefight. A Polish solder also died in the attack. Afghan forces averted a larger tragedy by finding and neutralizing a second car bomb near the base.

We lost two brave soldiers during that assault, but in the words of Army Lt. General Mark Milley, "the defenders did extraordinarily well. The enemy completely failed in achieving any kind of operational or strategic effect."

The defense of the Ghazni Base is just one example of how ISAF troops have worked together seamlessly in military actions. I bring it up today because it is a concrete example of interoperability at the level of personnel. Polish and

American troops have fought together for years in Afghanistan, using the same logistic chains, living in the same bases, and functioning as a unit.

Another excellent example of interoperability was NATO's deployment of missile defense assets from Germany and the Netherlands to Turkey in 2012 to protect a NATO ally from a possible missile attack by the Asad regime. Three different nations were able to tie their missile systems together to create one united air defense system. NATO Secretary General Rasmussen stated that the value of augmenting Turkey's defenses will "serve as an effective deterrent, and that way deescalate the situation along the Syrian-Turkish border."

Allied nations should strive for a similar level of integration when designing their ballistic missile defense systems. We need more than the common will to fight together and train together. We need systems that can communicate with each other. If allies' systems cannot freely share data, then military commanders are not working off the same operating picture.

Conclusion

In closing, The United States supports the efforts of countries to invest in defense modernization and protect their citizens from the threat of ballistic missile attacks. In the NATO context, we encourage our Allies to align their national defense priorities with NATO's goals. This will contribute to the Alliance's military strength and political cohesion.

U.S. companies stand ready to help our partners realize their goals. U.S. industry leads the world in missile defense technology and experience, which is why so many countries have partnered with U.S. private industry in developing air and missile defense systems. Moreover, the purchase of U.S. systems will lead to greater and deeper defense cooperation with the United States, and other international partners who have also chosen U.S. systems.

Whether Allies choose American systems or develop their own, the critical point is that our command and control systems should be interoperable. This will enable us to combine our resources and maximize our collective security.

Thank you for your attention and commitment to this critical issue. I wish you an informative and productive conference.